the Central Government will be glad to extend all assistanc$_e$ to them. It is not possible to lay down any time limit for resolving these matters.

Stateless people of Nepalese origin residing in Sikkim

1147. SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA;
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state,-

(a) whether it is a fact that there are over thirty thousand stateless people of Nepalese origin in Sikkim; and

(b if so, what measures are being taken to grant them Indian citizenship?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA): (a) and (b) A$_n$ order was issued on 16th May, 1975 under Section 7 of the Citizenship Act, 1955 providing that every person who immediately before 26th April, 1975 (date whe.$_n$ Sikkim became th$_e$ 22nd State of the Indian Union) was a Sikkim Subject under the Sikkim Subjects Regulation, 1961, would be deemed to have become a Citize$_n$ of India. Those who were not registered under th$_e$ aforesaid Regulation of 1961, or were not: eligible to be so registered are among the persons who may be regarded as stateless, unless they have a claim to any other nationality.

The claims of such persons for citizen-»hip are to be considered with due caution keeping in view the provisions of th$_e$ Citizenship Act, 1955.

Implementation of recommendations of .. .Pande Committee

1148. SHRI AMARPROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased, to state by when the freight equalisation policy is likely to he implemented as recommended by the Pande Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRi N. K. P. SALVE): The modalities and time phasing of the withdrawal of freight equalisation scheme in respect of iron anj steel ar$_e$ being worked out in consultation with th$_e$ Ministries/Departments concerned. It is not possible at this stage to give a time schedule for its phasing out.

Prime Minister's visit to various foreign conntriei

1149. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will th$_e$ PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether »t is a fact that the Prime Minister visited a number of countries during the perioj from 1st lanuary; 1984 t$_0$ 30th June, 1984;

(b) if so, th$_e$ details and the outcome of those visits;

(c) the details of the talks held with dignitaries there, protocols signed and agreements arrived at;

(d) whether it is also a fact that a number of foreign dignitaries have met and held talks with the Prime Minister during the period from 1st January, 1984 to 30th June, 1984 when they visited this country; and

(e) if so, the details of the talks agreement arrived at and protocols signed in India and the result thereof?

THE MINISfRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI A. A. RAHIM); (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Prime Minister visited the Soviet Unio$_n$ fiom February 13—15, 1984 to attend the funeral of the late President Yuri Andropov. The opportunity was utilised to exchange views with the new Soviet leader Mr K Chernenko o$_n$ international affairs and matters of bilateral interest.

The Prime Minister visited Libya (April „ 7-8, 1984) and Tunisia (April 8-9, 1984) in response to long standing invitations. The discussions with the leaders of these two countries focussed on international $_t$ situation. particularly situation in West Asia, the Iran—Iraq war, and all the various aspects of bilateral relations. While in Tunisia, th$_e$ Prime Minister als$_0$ met Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the P.L.O. and Mr. Chedli Klibi, Secretary General of the Arab League.

(d) Yes, Sir.